

[as prepared]

Thank you to the Clean Air Act Coalition for bringing us together today and to Children's Hospital for hosting us. We are here to call attention to a gathering threat to the quality of the air Americans breathe.

Clean air is something we all care about: legislators, doctors, teachers, parents and grandparents. In Minnesota, we've always worked together on a bipartisan basis to protect our air quality.

In fact, America has a tradition of bipartisan cooperation to protect the quality of our air. The Environmental Protection Agency was created by in 1970 by President Richard Nixon – a Republican.. The Clean Air Act was signed into law by President Nixon in 1970.

The landmark 1990 amendment to the Clean Air Act was signed by Republican President George H.W. Bush. The 1990 amendment passed with the votes of 89 Senators and over 400 House Members!

For decades, clean air has been an American value – not a partisan issue. That's common-sense: Democrats and Republicans have asthma and heart attacks. But in recent years bipartisan support for clean air has broken down.

Since January – when the Republican majority took control of the House – we have seen an all out assault on the quality of our air. Just last week, the House passed the TRAIN Act. The purpose of this legislation is to prevent the EPA from doing its job to protect public health. The bill would tie the EPA in knots with bureaucracy. It would prevent the Agency from taking action on Cross State Air Pollution Rules and Mercury Emission reduction.

The Republicans are promising more bills that will allow polluters to dump toxic pollutants into our air – pollutants like mercury, soot, arsenic and sulfur dioxide. These attacks on the Clean

Air Act are attacks on the well-being of our community, and communities across this country.

The Clean Air Act is one of the most successful laws in American history. In 2010, an EPA study showed the Clean Air Act has saved one-hundred-and-sixty-thousand (160,000) American lives. That's equivalent to saving the lives of every person living in Roseville, Woodbury and Eagan.

My Republican colleagues argue that Americans must choose between economic growth and public health. That is a false choice – EPA analysis shows that the Clean Air Act will have produced \$2 trillion in economic benefits by 2020. In reality, Republicans are choosing special interests over the public interest.

If Republicans in Congress are successful in blocking the new federal clean air standards, our country would see: at least 38,000 more premature deaths; at least 19,000 more heart attacks; at least 200,000 more asthma attacks; and over 4 million more missed school and work days.

This would do real harm to our friends and neighbors AND undermine economic productivity AND increase health care costs. I am not going to let this happen – and President Obama is not going to let this happen! Sound science should guide our policymaking – not political ideology, and not special interest lobbyists. We cannot allow polluters to use this economic downturn as an excuse to wipe out the basic protections Americans have counted on for decades. I agree with President Obama when he says we should have no more regulation than necessary to protect the health, safety, and security of the American people.

Minnesota has shown that we can clean up our air, protect our people, and grow our economy. For example, the 2006 Metropolitan Emissions Reduction Project that made huge reductions in mercury and sulfur dioxide. Xcel Energy didn't push for the TRAIN Act or try to block the new EPA rules. Xcel's Chief Operating Officer said the 2006 emissions reduction project put them in a "good position to comply with these rules."

I am going to hold my colleagues in Washington to the Minnesota standard. And I'm going to keep fighting with all of you for cleaner air, healthier children and a stronger economy.

Thank you!